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shares ten things
she can't live without

Brad Skinner
and Leslie Coates

Plus

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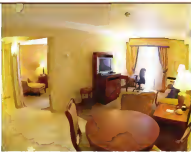
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PROFILE

In the moment

She's plotting a new course, writing new songs and squeezing in a bucket list on the side.

Kristin Sweetland's time is now

IT'S THE MORNING AFTER A GIG at the London Music Club, but for Kristin Sweetland, it could be the morning after the life before—the start of a new direction in her singing-songwriting career.

She is days away from heading to New York to meet a new manager and to discuss that elusive “next level”. After a decade as a soloist in the folk-indie vein, Sweetland leans across a table at a busy downtown Starbucks to confide, “I secretly want to rock out.”

Fans of her eclectic sound shouldn't be surprised. The past decade of travelling the road, writing songs and recording two CDs has unleashed a range of musical styles and influences, everything from Bach and Emmylou Harris to Sting and Eminem. She's planning to release a new recording by the fall of 2009, and wants to handpick a band that can record and perform with her.

While the standard surround of bass, drums and a second guitar are likely accompaniments to this next stage in her life, it's fitting this fan of Yo-Yo Ma would ideally like to add a cello player for the “chocolate sounds” the instrument delivers.

“I've got so many directions I want to go,” she says. “I need to focus on my dreams and make sure they'll happen.”

Don't doubt they will. The London native's singing and guitar playing have drawn rave reviews from critics and fans alike as she plies her trade in cities and towns across North America and beyond. “The road is exciting, it's different every day,” she says with the contagious enthusiasm that often punctuates her speech. Life on the road, she says, is akin to “making adventures; having those magic moments where you trust your intuition.”

Sweetland hopes to write intensively for the remainder of the year, a process she describes as “brilliantly, creatively tortuous—awful and amazing.” The melody comes first for Sweetland, often acquired when she's out walking, the rhythm of her stroll presenting a refrain. From there the lyrics “fill in the blanks,” coming to her much in the same way a sculptor finds shape in a slap of marble, she says.

On her last CD, *Own Sweet Time*, Sweetland worked with about 150 different snatches of melody she often captured by calling herself and leaving a message. “That's why God invented cell phones,” she says with a laugh, noting she also carries an mp3 recorder for such occasions.

But it isn't just music on her mind. The thirty-something singer recently constructed a life list that includes owning a villa and vineyard in France, completing a self-portrait video, writing a book and playing the Newport Folk Festival.

There are no specific timelines for these milestones, she says, perhaps unconsciously echoing a couple of lines from her song *The Fox Fire*: “Plant a seed and let it grow / Everything is ready in its own sweet time.” MARK KEARNEY



INTERVIEW

Artfully done

Karen Pincombe reflects on how a summer job and a friend's challenge changed her destiny

MUSIC IS OFTEN CALLED food for the soul. So it's fitting that the London Food Bank is home to one of Canada's most unique fine arts programs for children.

Arts for All Kids started with an old piano, two teachers and half-a-dozen students. This fall the program celebrates its 20th anniversary. Today, 25 volunteers provide free music, dance, art, creative writing and drama classes to more than 80 London youth, Thursday evenings from September to April.

Founder and co-director Karen Pincombe talks about the program, the importance of arts for all and life on a steady diet of smiles.

Q> How did Arts for All Kids begin?

A> Twenty years ago I was hired by the Salvation Army to be the music director at Camp Glen Huron. My job was to have the kids put on a musical in the span of seven days. The raw talent and transformation of the kids as they participated in the musical was amazing.

After I came home I was talking to my good friends Glenn Pearson and Jane Roy about how great it would be to have a community group where kids could come and do this sort of thing. Glenn finally said, "Why don't you stop talking and just do it?" That's when we moved the piano into the basement of the food bank.

Q> Who is eligible to participate?

A> Our classes are open to kids between the ages of seven and 12. But we're targeting the kids who don't have the opportunity to participate in any other extracurricular class. If parents are unsure if they qualify I ask, "If I were teaching your child piano privately, the minimum I would charge is \$17 a half hour. Can you afford me? If the answer is no, their kids should be here."

Q> Some people see the arts as a frill. What is your response to that opinion?

A> This program has really honed my thoughts about the importance of the arts in kids' lives. The arts can foster important aspects of a child's development—self-confidence, risk taking and co-operation. They can also provide kids with a different circle of friends, which can make a huge difference in a child's life. But mostly, the arts give kids a sense of who they are and a way of expressing it.

Q> You're a full-time music teacher at Mountsfield Public School and a percussionist with Orchestra London. Why dedicate so much of your time to volunteering with Arts for All Kids?

A> I live on the smiles. I can't describe the feeling I get when I move from room to room and see the kids happy and excelling, or when a parent tells me that we have changed their child's life.

I think I got hooked at that summer camp. And then, with the support of my friends and the food bank it became possible. I really feel that this is what I am meant to do with my life. When I retire, this is where I hope to spend my time.

NICKOLE LAUDER



Karen Pincombe



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Riding the bars



IS IT ILLEGAL TO RIDE A BIKE
WHEN YOU'RE DRUNK?

THE ANSWER IS NO...and yes. The federal criminal code section on driving while impaired refers only to motor vehicles such as cars, jet skis and Zambonis (Canadians have been charged with knocking too many back while piloting all of the above). But you can still end up in the drunk tank under a different rule, says Constable Dave Bloch-Hansen of the traffic management unit of the London Police Service.

A visibly inebriated cyclist, says Bloch-Hansen, can be charged with public drunkenness, which is covered under the provincial Liquor Control Act. The act covers being drunk and being a danger to yourself or others. And weaving your bicycle through traffic or possibly falling off clearly presents a danger, he says.

"A bicycle is a vehicle under the (provincial) Highway Traffic Act, so you still have to obey the rules of the road. But impaired driving is about motorized vehicles."

That means driving a motorized bicycle like a moped while impaired would fall under the federal criminal code, as would driving one of the new e-bikes because they have motors. Bloch-Hansen says he's witnessed several instances of this behavior during his 34 years as a police officer. If someone is arrested in those circumstances, the bike is impounded at the same time.

According to one study, riding with the legal limit of alcohol in one's veins increases the risk of a fatal accident by 2,000 per cent. This should be enough to convince you to substitute a cab for your BMX on your next ride home from the bar.

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10 THINGS

Tara Overholt

The weekend anchor and reporter at A News picks the 10 things she can't live without

I. What I'll never give up

Coffee. I have an extra large every morning. Although I can function without, I choose not to. It is one thing that entices me out of bed every morning (see my decadent indulgence).

II. Where I go to escape

Hill the pavement running. I am not a marathoner, but running is the best way to beat a bad day or a bad frame of mind.

III. My favourite workout

When I first moved here six years ago, I joined Sistas Soccer, a women's rec soccer league. I was so lucky to meet so many great people. And that is so important when you move to a new city. I now play both indoor and outdoor. It's the best workout because you work hard, but it never feels like a workout.

IV. What I've wanted since I was a kid

My own TV show, so I guess you could say I am kind of there. My sister and I had over-active imaginations—and for too much energy—and a video camera to capture it all. From variety shows to talk shows and even the news, there are endless hours of my childhood caught on tape. Fortunately I have all the tapes.

V. My fast-food fix:

You must understand, pizza is the first love of my life. I could eat it every day, but have limited myself to once a week. Usually it's Saturday, during my dinner break from the news, at Piero's Pizzo. They know me all too well there. Two slices and a pop for \$3.50, it doesn't get any better.

VI. My favourite television show

Right now there are some great shows out there. I am a big fan of series like *Entourage*, *Californication* and *Weeds*. But hands-down my favourite is *30 Rock*. Although it's a brilliant ensemble piece, it's really all about the relationship between greets Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin.

VII. My decadent indulgence

I like to sleep like a hibernating bear. Long before I could blame my lazy morning sleeping on my crazy TV schedule (early, early mornings, late nights), I was always late getting to school. Although I can say I own the most efficient morning routine out there.

VIII. My favourite piece of technology

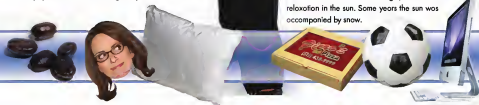
My Moc. I am the biggest tool when it comes to technology. I bought a Moc because you are supposed to be able to just plug it in and use it. Yeah, right. While I have figured some things out, thanks to my technologically wise friends, I know there is so much more I can do with my computer. Which is kind of exciting, because every night when I sit down, there is so much possibility sitting in front of me. If I would just make the effort to learn.

IX. My most treasured family heirloom

Aunt Jean's old fur coat. As a kid, I remember trying on Aunt Jean's faux fur coat and thinking it was just so fancy. Well, upon reflection, the coat perhaps wasn't so fancy. You see, within my extended family, the coat was often borrowed for special occasions. Not high-class dining, but rather Halloween. My mother, aunt, cousins, sister and I have all worn the fur coat as the crowning jewel piece of our well known tacky old lady costume.

X. My favourite road trip

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Every March break my parents packed my sister and me into the family minivan for a long drive to the golf capital of the world. Seventeen hours straight, all for a week of relaxation in the sun. Some years the sun was accompanied by snow.



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ENTERPRISE

Who let the dogs out?

For a growing number of pampering pet owners, it's a professional pet sitter

MANY PEOPLE REALIZE they've found their calling in life at unexpected moments, but for professional pet sitter Jevé Sukhdeo, the circumstances were more memorable than most.

"I went to a client's house for a five-minute consultation about a pet and ended up staying for dinner," he recalls. "I must have been there three or four hours, chatting and enjoying their company. I remember thinking, 'Here I am visiting a client for the very first time and, wow, they're feeding me. This is a pretty cool way to make a living.'"

Three years ago, Sukhdeo, a former restaurant manager, had a revelation. In a city such as London, filled with thousands of busy professionals such as himself, there must be a demand for reliable, responsible people to take care of pets.

Soon after, Sukhdeo launched Jevé's Pet Care, a pet sitting and dog walking business that has since mushroomed in to a successful enterprise catering to the needs of a diverse clientele, primarily in the city core. "My clients range from students to retirees; from the very affluent to a mother with three kids just trying to get by," says Sukhdeo. "What they have in common is they all love their pets tremendously. They want them loved and cared for in the best possible way."

Traditionally, most pet owners turned to friends and neighbours to watch their animals when needed, or dropped them off at kennels and veterinary clinics. But for a growing number of people, tired of imposing on their friends or wracked by guilt after leaving their pets behind at a kennel, in-home care is the perfect solution.

"Pet-sitting allows animals to stay in their own familiar environment and receive food, exercise and attention with



Jevé Sukhdeo

minimal disruption to their normal routines," says Sukhdeo. "They're creatures of habit, just like we are." And for canines cooped up at home all day, he adds, dog walking provides a badly needed bathroom break and outlet for excess energy.

As more and more people discover the benefits pet sitters offer, Sukhdeo is seeing demand for his services take off. "The growth has been phenomenal," he says. "I had just three clients my first year of business. Now I sign up a new client every two weeks." Sukhdeo recently contracted an additional pet care provider, Charisse Roberts, to help handle the workload. Their charges include dogs, cats, birds, other small animals and even fish.

Since setting up shop, Sukhdeo has received his fair share of peculiar assignments, including a couple who wanted him to stay with a pair of swans while they attended their daughter's wedding. "It didn't end up happening," he recalls with a chuckle. "I think the wedding was called off."

Despite the occasional unusual client, Sukhdeo says he wouldn't do anything else. "I've always been an animal person, and providing love and care for pets just comes naturally. I really love hanging out with pets." GORD DELAMONT

ON THE SHELVES

A selection of some of the best food stuffs from around the city

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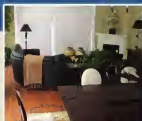
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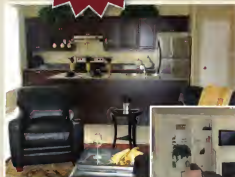


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THE HISTORY: The 68-year-old house was originally built by the Bailey family, founders of London Motor Products. Prior to Murphy and Mitchell purchasing the property in 1991, the previous

owner completed several renovations. Some of the windows have since been upgraded.

THE TOUR: The open-concept kitchen, family room and cathedral ceilings all lend a feeling of space and light to the interior. Hardwood floors and natural wood trim run throughout most of the home. Two energy efficient gas furnaces and two air conditioners handle the air management duties, while three gas fireplaces add ambiance and cut through any lingering fall chill. Two of the bedrooms feature ensuites, and the finished basement can pull double-duty as an exercise room.

REASON FOR MOVING: With their children now grown, Murphy and Mitchell want to downsize.

POTENTIAL BUYER: Mary Pellarin, realtor with Royal LePage Triland Realty, says the house has plenty of room to raise a family and is ideal for anyone who "loves to entertain, but also loves their privacy." MARK KEARNEY





MUSIC

Pump up the volume

The Western music program graduates some of the world's finest musicians. *Just don't ask us about it*

DON MCKELLAR OFTEN WONDERS why London doesn't wake up and hear the music.

"For some reason, the city is not really aware of what we have here," says the retired head of the department of music education at the University of Western Ontario.

Indeed, the faculty of music has been putting Western—and by extension, London—on national and world stages for over 40 years. "The students came to us in droves," McKellar says, recalling the program's beginnings in the early-1960s. "We started with 20 students and after four years we had 100. After five years we had 150 and after 10 years we had 500."

But it's a tail wagging the dog state of affairs. Musicians, students and music aficionados from Vancouver to Taipei to Vienna are well aware of Western's music program. Londoners, on the other hand, not so much.

"Our faculty of music rates among the top three in Canada," says McKellar. "We have a program that has produced thousands of musicians, singers and teachers who are known all across Canada and around the world, and the only place this isn't really known is right here in the city of London."

And it's not like we don't have the opportunity to hear the message. "We have close to 350 live performances [on campus] every year, most of them

free to the community," says program dean Robert Wood. The performances cover a full spectrum of musical genres, from Bach to Basie to Bachman-Turner Overdrive.

"We are one of the big three [university music programs in Canada], but unlike the University of Toronto or McGill, we are unique in being located in a much smaller city," Wood says, adding that the program attracts students from near and far. "The size of our voice program alone—we have 180 students majoring in voice this year—absolutely floored the president of the University of Nebraska when he visited here."

Those students, notes McKellar, include thousands of Londoners (and former Londoners scattered around the world) who have passed through the program, coming from just about every economic and social background. London's homegrown music education system—starting citywide in grade seven, continuing through a superb secondary-school program and culminating at Western—has produced internationally renowned musicians, singers, technicians and composers.



"The amazing thing is that when a lot of these people first start out taking music in grade seven, they have never touched an instrument and can't read music," McKellar marvels.

The system has produced award-winning musical ensembles and choirs, at all age levels, many of which have toured overseas. In fact, the system has produced young musicians of such quality and in such numbers that



Robert Wood and Don McKellar

Canada's National Youth Orchestra regularly rehearses here.

And it has spun off, by the dozens, a whole community of talent—musicians and singers who perform solo, in small combos and in larger bands, playing everything from classic chamber music to jazz and rock at bars, weddings, concert halls and every other imaginable venue across the region.

Says Wood, "It has had an enormous impact in this community." **BY CUREE**

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A photograph of a dining room set from the Sonoma Collection. It features a large wooden hutch with glass doors displaying plates and bowls. In front of the hutch is a wooden dining table with four chairs. The table is set with a red bowl, a red pitcher, and a small basket. A decorative wall hanging is on the left wall, and a potted plant is on the right. A red circular badge in the bottom left corner reads "CELEBRATING OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY".

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FAMILY affairs



They're modest, creative and off the beaten path. Ethnic eateries are the unsung heroes in our city's culinary chorus

BY CHRISTOPHER CLARK

NEWCOMERS TO ANY CITY slowly settle into their surroundings as they work their way down an unofficial citizenry checklist. The list includes everything from learning traffic patterns and shortcuts to finding a favourite gym, butcher and mechanic. Also on the list: seeing familiar faces in a crowd and knowing the names of local politicians.

One of the greatest citizenry moments comes when we find an out-of-the-way ethnic restaurant, where the noodles or curry or tapas are as authentic as they are delicious. A second or third visit is all it takes to become a regular, to feel comfortable in new surroundings.

This restaurant eureka moment can happen to new and old citizens alike, although the longer we live in a city, the more rigid become our habits, the less likely we are to find something new.

Finding that ethnic restaurant is gratifying too because it says something about our city. The city that has such restaurants—tucked into strip malls,

attached to auto garages, in basements and attics—is much richer for it. Without these imported culinary jewels, a city is sterile. Such eateries at once bring the world to a city and also create a sense of neighbourhood and commonality.

The restaurant owners, of course, do not think in such grandiose terms when they go into business. Often they are displaced from their homelands, fleeing strife of one kind or another, and they choose to do what they know, cooking the foods of their homeland and recreating a little piece of the place where they were born.



Ping Kwan of Ken's Chinese Restaurant.
Opposite: El Ranchito on Wellington Road
and entrées from Thuan Kieu

As often as not, the restaurant is a family affair, relying on the energy of children, uncles, aunts and cousins. The work is hard, and the financial reward is not great—more like treading water than a 100-metre sprint. Still, London has plenty of fantastic ethnic restaurants, run by resourceful, humble and hard working people who think very little of what they contribute to the tapestry of the city.

Kermy Kwan came to Canada from Hong Kong in 1981, four years after Ping Kwan, his wife of 26 years, emigrated.



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Dining

She came from China, and they met in Winnipeg. They've done a kind of Canadian tour since getting married, moving to Vancouver and then to Ontario. After three years in St. Thomas, they came to London in 2001.

Everywhere they've lived, they've run a restaurant. The current version is Ken's Chinese Restaurant in a strip mall on Wilkins Street, in a quiet neighbourhood not far from the frenzy of Wellington Road. It features the standard Chinese food menu, with dozens of choices. But the specialty is Dim Sum, lighter fare served in smaller portions with Chinese tea. It draws the regulars for lunch and dinner. There are two dozen choices on a separate Dim Sum menu, ranging from bean curd rolls to steamed chicken wraps to turnip cakes.

The couple's three girls and one boy have helped at their parents' restaurants over the years. Two are in high school; two have graduated. They work there primarily on weekends, giving their parents some much-needed assistance.

"It's just the two of us working here most days," says Ping with a smile. She is informing, not complaining. "We open for lunch, then close for a couple of hours and open again for dinner. We do that every day except Tuesday. We take Tuesday off," she says before adding that really they only take Tuesday evening off. "We usually serve Tuesday lunch."

The hours are tough, but they don't have much choice. "This year is the slowest we've ever had," Ping says, as Kenny nods in agreement. "We have not as many customers and our costs are high, so we hope things do not stay this way very long."

Before Azucena Salgado and her family opened El Ranchito restaurant in 2001, she sold traditional Salvadorian pupusas at the Old Trail End Farmer's Market. The corn tortilla can be filled with many things including pork, cheese, refried beans and green peppers. They are grilled and served with Salvadorian coleslaw and salsa.

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Azucena Salgado

"Our pupusas were popular at the market, so we decided to open our own restaurant," says Salgado. She left her homeland of El Salvador in 1983 after some of the bloodiest attacks in the early years of the country's 12-year civil war.

First she went to Toronto. Why Toronto? "The government sent us there," she says with a shrug. Her husband, Jose Mauricio, founded a technician's job at GM's Scarborough van plant (since mothballed). In 1994, he was transferred to London to work at GM Diesel, as it was known. He has continued working there, although the plant has changed ownership and names a few times since.

Like the Kwan's business, El Ranchito is a family affair. Children and in-laws work there, serving a full Central and South American menu from breakfast to dinner. The pupusas are Azucena's favourite thing to make and eat, but the menu includes quesadillas, soups, salads, enchiladas, burritos and tacos, along with some great steak, chicken and seafood dishes.



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Dining



Nguu Le and Huu Le

The interior is bright and cheerful, as is the reception Azucena gives her customers. From her location on Wellington Road, just south of Horton Street, she has watched approvingly as the city has reworked the entire Wellington corridor leading to downtown.

"It's very nice now. I enjoy looking out the front window and seeing all the people every day," she says.

The restaurant has changed quite a bit in seven years. "When we started we didn't have a menu. I was making pupusas and taking requests from our customers. Often we would host a class from Fanshawe College or Western. People learning Spanish would come in to eat our food and use the language they were learning. Everything we serve here is authentic and fresh, just like in El Salvador," she says.

When asked how many family members work at Thuan Kieu, the Vietnamese restaurant his parents started in 1996, their son Chien Le pauses and starts using his fingers to count. After some help from a sibling or two, he comes up with 10, although it might be off by one or two.

His parents, Nguu Le and Huu Le, opened the restaurant on Huron Street, east of Adelaide Street, 12 years ago after several years running a Vietnamese grocery store in the same plaza. They had come to Canada in 1979, part of the wave of boat people from Vietnam.

Chien remembers the first few years



of the restaurant as very lean. "No one came," he says, acknowledging the stress those years put on his parents, as they struggled to raise a young family and keep the restaurant going.

Success came in the form of three engineers at 3M Canada. "They started coming here for lunch, Dan and Julie and Joe," Chien recalls as though it happened last week. "They started coming regularly and they spread the word. Pretty soon lots of people were coming. They have all left 3M since then, but they still come to eat here."

Although they came from Vietnam, the family is of Chinese background, and so their Vietnamese restaurant serves primarily Chinese dishes. The difference may be lost on many of their customers, but the restaurant has always drawn more Chinese diners than Vietnamese. Pad Thai is a popular dish among Caucasian diners. The Asian crowd tends to go for the Pho, a noodle soup for which the restaurant is well known.

After those early lean years, the business has flourished, so much so that Chien says there are plans to either expand or move. "We need more room, so we need to do something."

Finding people to work at a larger restaurant shouldn't be a problem. Chien and his wife, Vanessa, have four children, ranging from one to eight years old. No doubt they too will toil in the restaurant during their formative years. *LC*

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Tripping the Light Fantastic

Inspired architecture meets urban sanctuary. Architect Brad Skinner creates a showpiece home on the river **BY MARK KEARNEY**



IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE a residential project that has elicited more comments or sparked more conversation.

For countless motorists passing by on Riverside Drive, it's been the mysterious onyx blue cube—a neighbourhood anomaly for its height, shape and modern, acute lines.

For those viewing the proceedings from across the river, it's been the house of glass, a crystal abode erected on an idyllic perch above of the Thames and

sheltered by a canopy of mature trees.

But for architect Brad Skinner and his wife Leslie Coates, their new home is all of that and so much more. It's an environmental gem, a haven from a busy world and a playpen for ever-shifting angles of light. Seen from the inside out, it is all about openness and complementary textures. And, of course, that magnificent view of the Thames.

"On a simple level, the building has walls, windows, doors and a roof, as other houses do," says Skinner, "but they are not organised within the same architectural language."

Indeed, the home is built on design principles the average person may not even consider, or for that matter, easily identify. Skinner experimented with different proportions to make the design work, using common building material specifications while incorporating the "golden ratio"—a mathematical principle that has influenced architecture, design, art and music for centuries. Proportioning elements according to the golden ratio created an overall sense of continuity; elements of the home in rhythm with one another interplay with those that have what may seem like irregularities. Says Skinner, "A lot of interest was created by the overlaps."

Skinner and Coates purchased the infill lot about four years ago with an eye to creating something unique to the area. Set among trees and offering a view the couple describes as "just incredible," the property was not without its challenges. Most notably, the slope of the land and the required setback restricted the size of the home. But, as Skinner notes, "being an architect, you can turn your problems into opportunities."

Conforming to municipal setback rules and not encroaching on the ravine at the back left a 30- by 30-foot foundation to work with. "[It] made building three storeys an obvious solution to address both the constraints and opportunities of the site," says Skinner.

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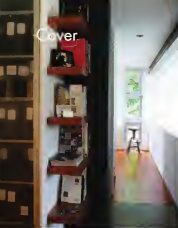
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The passive design principles are age-old and largely lost in current building practices that rely on large, mechanized units for heating and cooling]



home's street-side exposure can seem at odds with a design driven to welcome in the natural elements. But a closer look reveals some architectural magic at work. To filter out the street noise, for example, the front windows are recessed four feet from the main façade and acid-etched to maintain privacy but allow light to flow through. This recess, explains Skinner, is further sheltered by horizontal strips of cedar extending up the façade to give the appearance of a

light-filtering wall. "There is still over 135 square feet of glass at the front of the house facing the street, a far greater area than in most new, residential houses."

The home also employs a number of innovative and environment-friendly construction features to address the most energy-intensive parts of the house. Passive design, imbued in the three-storey, south facing window wall, is used to flood the house with light, eliminating the need for day lights. The windows also provide tremendous solar heat gain in winter but are shaded in summer by existing trees. The venting windows on three sides and operable roof skylight create a stack effect—allowing a breeze to enter and warm air to escape out the roof. The passive design principles are age-old and largely lost in current building practices that rely on large, mechanized units for heating and cooling.

All of the home's energy systems—lighting, heating, cooling and appliances—are electrically powered. The active technologies, including geothermal heating and cooling, radiant in-floor heating, grey water recycling and energy efficient European appliances, are supplied by renewable energy purchased from Bullfrog Power. "The house has completely green footprint," notes Skinner, "which I don't think you can say about too many other buildings."

To truly appreciate the home's unique design, however, one has to step inside. In an instant the less apparent becomes the obvious as natural light floods the interior from almost every direction, playing off the walls and dancing on floors.

Entering from the side glass door, you first encounter the kitchen and dining areas, which spill into the main floor great room. Cherry wood cabinets line the kitchen, echoing materials employed on the second and third floors of the house, and the dining room is contained by a standard and more intimate eight-foot ceiling, making the great room's cathedral ceiling an impressive contrast.

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Cover

Skinner has created an architectural showpiece — a residential exclamation mark in a town that often seems a little too bent on suburban sameness

Once you enter the great room, you grasp the *raison d'être* of the entire design: a 240-square-foot window wall, measuring 14 by 17 feet, not only provides a stunning view down to the Thames and above to treetops and sky, but also acts as the gatekeeper of light throughout the day.

Skinner says his design was always about bringing in light and experiencing what is going on outside in each of the seasons through shifts in the play of light. Watching this unfold as the home was constructed, Skinner recalls, "Fall was just incredible with the colour of the trees."

But there are numerous other focal points as well. The polished concrete floor, for instance, lends surprising warmth to the main level. And a centre partition housing a television and fireplace serves to disconnect the great room from the dining area, yet it doesn't interrupt the flow between the two spaces. "It's the one element inside the house that is centered," Skinner notes. Coates likens it to a sculpture that provides function as well as aesthetics.

As much as light is a constant, so is attention to detail. And one of the standout features of the home is a floating concrete staircase leading to the second level. The cantilevered stairs are an example of how Skinner designed every square inch of the house, customizing as he went and engineering features that, while contributing to openness and light, were also strong and functional. "It makes for a ton of work to figure out," Skinner says, a smile hinting at the thrill

lurking behind the challenge. A witness to the struggles, Coates adds, "It's very hard to make things look simple."

The second floor is divided into office space for Coates and Skinner respectively, and remains dominated by the massive window wall. "Any time you come up and down the stairs, every time you move around the house, the view is always there," Skinner says. While Coates won the coin toss and enjoys workspace looking out on the river's sweep, Skinner's office overlooks another unique feature—the "green" garage attached to the home. An existing structure when the couple purchased the lot, the couple opted to keep the garage and refurbish it to retain some of the vernacular of the street and help mesh with surrounding homes. Topped with ground covering sedum that changes colour with the seasons, Skinner says the garage roof "extends nature while softening the look."

Still something of a work in progress, the third floor is home to the master bedroom with ensuite. An operable roof skylight furthers the commitment to natural light and enhances ventilation, and the rooftop features a wooden patio framed with the same ground covering as the garage. Elsewhere on the third level you'll find a laundry room and bathroom featuring a polished concrete countertop, an extension of the building materials established on the main floor.

A house unlike any other in the city, Skinner has created an architectural showpiece—a residential exclamation mark in a town that often seems a little too bent on suburban sameness. But it's first a home, a residence that is ideally suited to Skinner and Coates. "The space feels right," says Coates.

Skinner speaks proudly of a friend who described the home as "an incredible mix of simplicity and complexity." However you describe it, the couple believes all the time and effort has paid off.

"It takes a lot of decision making," sums up Coates. "It takes a lot of time and courage to be unique." *ec*

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RETIREMENT. GOLF. FLORIDA. BOREDOM. What do these terms have in common? Not much, according to a mountain of recent studies of the lifestyles and demographics of aging baby-boomers. Today's empty-nesters are a more diverse group than ever before, taking advantage of their newly found free time and discretionary income. They're changing the way we think about the second half of life, living out their dreams and fulfilling life goals.

The notion that life after the children leave necessarily means loneliness and boredom has been swept away. That myth, it seems, grew from 1960s research on women being

treated for depression, according to *My Turn*, a 1997 book by author Patricia Gottlieb Shapiro. Shapiro researched the lives of 45 women whose children had "left the nest" and discovered that most felt a sense of relief and freedom. Other scientific studies have found similar results.

Indeed, nearly one-third of Canada's 32 million inhabitants are now considered maturing baby-boomers, a very large and relatively affluent group that is looking for much more from the after-family years than rocking chairs and leisurely post-dinner strolls.

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What, No Shuffleboard?



These days, you've got to look harder to find empty nesters because they're not necessarily living where you'd expect them. A recent

Canada-wide survey studying the housing goals, preferences and priorities of people aged 45 and older came up with some eye-opening results. Mature buyers, it seems, aren't likely to stray too far. Only one-third of respondents planning to move in the next five years will head for another region of the country; of the remaining local movers, more than one-half won't go farther than 25 miles from their current homes.

And boomers aren't much interested in living solely with folks their own age, either. Only 18

per cent of the future movers in the survey say they plan to move into "age-qualified" communities or developments. Instead, empty-nesters would rather be around people of all ages, especially children, and away from "old folks". That's understandable—we're talking about a younger, healthier, wealthier and more mobile demographic. Baby boomers are determined to remain independent for as long as possible. And medical research validates the lifestyle choice—activity has a direct impact on long-term health.

In fact, empty nesters will work hard to find the kind of mentally and physically stimulating avocations they demand. They're finding that tonic in community activities, volunteer work and start-up businesses.



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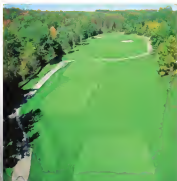
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Wanted: A Better Nest



The multi-bedroom, multi-level home most Canadians families end up in was originally selected for its size and location as an ideal place to raise children. Now, as those children leave home, many boomers are giving serious thought to the housing type, design and style that will serve them in their decades-long retirement.

When shopping for a house to raise a family in, people looked for enough space to allow a young family to run wild without getting trampled in the process. The North-American ideal of "my own room" dictated one bedroom for each child plus a bigger one for parents to hide out in. In many cases that added up to a three-, four- or five-bedroom home.

And multi-level living enabled mom and dad to keep their sanity—and ear drums—when seven-year-olds, and eventually 17-year-olds, gathered to hang out and blast out the latest tunes. Storage space was important because the kids never wanted to part with toys, books, sports equipment and all the other stuff that keeps the garage, basement and closets filled to overflowing.

But as children grow and leave home, many people are deciding the multi-bedroom, multi-level home is no longer a lifestyle ideal. What's more, if a home is keeping you cash poor, taking up too much of your time and energy or is not located in your ideal setting, you may be settling for too little. In fact, if you are just very used to the place, it may be time to shake up your life and find a home that is chosen just for you.

A World of Choice



The real estate development industry has discovered that people want to live active, involved lives in retirement—often even more exciting lives than they lived as moms, dads and employees.

From uniquely designed single-detached houses, condominium homes and golf course communities to row housing, high-rise condos and luxury apartment rentals, the range of housing choices for empty-nesters has grown dramatically over the past few years. What's more, construction techniques and materials have changed dramatically as well. "They don't build 'em like they used to" means they build 'em better in many respects. You can now have climate-controlled comfort without drafts and chilly corners. Roomy bathrooms with luxury add-ons galore mean no more banging your elbows when combing your hair or having to store towels a cold walk down the hall.

New boomer-friendly housing options incorporate a number of thoughtful design and development strategies to cater to the needs of their target demographic. They recognize that, to this nostalgic generation, the idea of home and hearth as the iconic center of family and as headquarters for holidays and family gatherings exerts a powerful, emotional appeal. Accordingly, while these newer homes trend somewhat smaller and more manageable in size, they are a far cry from tiny or cramped.





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Additional subtle, but important, design considerations for boomers speak to leisure, comfort, quality and convenience:

- * Ample open space and tall ceilings (which create a sense of "volume") are popular, as are transitional spaces like verandas or screened porches.
- * Minimizing unnecessary staircases through garden-style layouts is a common strategy.
- * Well-deserved small luxuries, such as double sinks and large, Jacuzzi-style soaking tubs are very popular.
- * Kitchens are important, but not critically so, and are ideally highly functional with expansive counter space. They don't need to be huge, as this demographic dines out a lot.
- * Laundry and utility rooms are convenient and accessible, without becoming too prominent or intruding into the living space. These Active Adults do not want to come home from one job only to be reminded right away that another job is awaiting them.
- * Wasted, excess space is not desirable, but, for a generation that often views retirement as an opportunity to start over and enjoy new experiences, space for hobbies and other pursuits can be a nice bonus.

To learn about your full range of housing choices, get out and explore new home developments. Knowing what your options are will help you decide whether to stay and renovate or start on a new adventure. Understanding your choices buyers will also help you prepare your home for resale if you decide it's time to cash in and move on.



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october november

ALTHOUGH ALL THE SUMMER FESTIVALS are over for another year, there is still plenty to do around the city this fall. For some spooky Halloween fun, Pioneer Village hosts haunted hayrides, the John Deere Museum in Ingersoll is having Spook Nights, Doors Open London hosts a Lost Soul Stroll and Original Kids is putting on a couple of Halloween themed shows.

For a little fresh air without the scare, the Millwraith Field Naturalists organizes a variety of different walks including one around Fanshawe Conservation Area and another around Gibbons Park. The Thames Valley Trail Association and Healthy Living London has year-round Saturday morning walks that explore a different park or nature area each week. See www.healthunit.com for details.

If you are looking for something a little different to do on a nice afternoon, Tourism London has launched a new Tree Trunk Tour. You may have already noticed various carved trees in the downtown London area. These trunks of trees that have died or become victims of storms are now pieces of public art that can be viewed on a new self-guided tour. There are 11 trees and more to be added by the end of the year. Part of what makes them unique is that they are created almost exclusively using chain saws. For a map showing where to find the trees, visit www.londontourism.co/treetrunktour.

And while many of you probably don't even want to think about it just yet, the holiday season is just around the corner, kicking off with the annual Santa Clause Parade on November 15. This year's theme is A Polar Christmas. If the parade doesn't ignite a festive spark, then perhaps the lights at Victoria Park will. The lights go on at the park on November 28 at the Lighting of the Lights event, part of

the annual Winter Wonderland celebration. For a different perspective, you can view them from the city Hall Promenade deck nightly from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. between November 28 and December 19 (except closed December 1, 8 and 15). The outdoor skating rink is scheduled to open December 5, weather permitting, and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (closed daily from 5:30-6:30 for ice resurfacing). Rinks at the market and Storybook Gardens are scheduled to open around the same time.



Carvers Robbin Wenzski (pictured) and Neil Cox have created 12 sculptures that form the self-guided London Tree Trunk Tour. See www.londontourism for information and maps

october 2-5

UWO HOMECOMING

Parade along Richmond St. Saturday morning, Western Mustangs vs. Windsor Lancers Saturday afternoon, entertainment, sporting events, University of Western Ontario, 519-661-2111, extension 85739, www.westernhomecoming.uwo.ca.

october 2-31

LOST SOUL STROLL

Created for those who like a good scare, costumed figures share ghostly true history in downtown London and the Forks of Thames. Organized by Doors Open London. Tickets at Grand Theatre Box Office 519-672-8800, www.doorsopenlondon.ca/lostsouls.html.

october 4

FALL PLANT SALE

Friends of the London Civic Garden Complex host their annual fall bulb and perennial sale, Civic Garden Complex, noon-4 p.m. 519-471-4746, 472-3553, www.lislandslog.ca.

october 4-5

FANSHAWE 1812:

THE INVASION OF UPPER CANADA Presented at Fanshawe Pioneer Village with the support of the Upper Canada Military ReEnactment Society, special admission rate applies, 519-457-1296, www.fanshawepioneerivillage.ca.

october 6

CARRIE UNDERWOOD

In concert at the John Labatt Centre. Tickets at JLC Box Office, 1-866-455-2849, www.johnlabattcentre.com.

october 10

ALICE COOPER

Psycho-Drama Tour 2008 at Centennial Hall, 519-672-1967, 519-672-1968, www.centennialhall.london.ca.

october 8

LONDON READS GRAND FINALE

Celebrating the 2008 London Reads winner, Three Day Road, and meet author, Joseph Boyden, 7 p.m., Wolf Performance Hall, Central Library, 519-661-3520 ext. 84573, www.londonreads.uwo.ca.

october 11

SOUTH SECONDARY SCHOOL HOMECOMING

South's alumni gather for a day of sport, entertainment and fun including a bag, live music, football games, tailgate party and more, 519-452-2860, www.southluni.ca.

october 11-13

FALL ON THE FARM

Harvesting of the corn crop, textiles arts and wood stove cooking, Fanshawe Pioneer Village, 519-457-1296, www.fanshawepioneerivillage.ca.

october 12

GIBBONS PARK STROLL

Enjoy wildlife and fall colours along the river, 1:30 p.m., meet in the parking lot at the west end of Victoria Street near the Montessori School. Organized by McIlwraith Field Naturalists, 519-439-5062, www.mcilwraith.ca.

october 17

NATURE IN ART:

THE MAKING OF A FIELD GUIDE

Artist and writer Fiona Reid speaks on the making of her book, *A Peterson Field Guide to Mammals of North America*, Civic Garden Complex, organized by McIlwraith Field Naturalists, 519-649-4168, www.mcilwraith.ca.

october 17-19, 23-26, 28-30

HAUNTED VILLAGE HAYRIDES

Haunted hay wagon takes you back in time to hear the true story of Pheobe Campbell who murdered her husband in 19th century Middlesex County, Fanshawe Pioneer Village, \$10, not recommended under age 10, advance tickets required, 519-457-1296, www.fanshawepioneerivillage.ca

october 17, 18, 24, 25

SPOOK NIGHTS

Walk a spooky trail of Leaping Deere legends in Ingersoll (in support of Ingersoll, Tilsonburg and Woodstock hospitals), 519-485-4795, www.leapingdeerelegends.com.

october 18

SPEAKEASY GALA

Fundraiser for Museum London. Transport yourself into the Chicago-style subterranean culture of gambling, jazz and rumormongers at Capone's lounge in 1933, 519-661-2500, www.museumlondon.ca.

october 18-19

WEDDING SHOW

Everything for the prospective bride and groom and their big day, 519-439-3921 www.cavettmarket.com.

october 19

PLAYDATE WITH MAX & RUBY, MISS SPIDER & BABAR

Family show at Centennial Hall, 519-672-1967, 519-672-1968, www.centennialhall.london.ca.

october 19

CAT SHOW

PWWSive PWWS Cat Club presents their annual show, Carling Heights Optimists Community Centre, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., 519-661-2523, www.catshow.ca.

october 19

WESTMISTER PONDS NATURE WALK

Observe fall birds, plants, and trees in one of London's environmentally significant areas, 1:30 p.m., meet behind the tourist information building on the east side of Wellington Rd., south of Commissioners. Organized by McIlwraith Field Naturalists, 519-649-4194, www.mcilwraith.ca.

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What's On october november

october 19

MUSIC FOR HOPE

Featuring Denise Pelley and Sara Westbrook, live auction, prize draws, Best Western Lamplighter Inn: Proceeds to Hope's Garden Eating Disorder Support and Resource Centre 519-434-7721, www.hopesgarden.org

october 21

HEDLEY

In concert at Centennial Hall, 519-672-1967, 519-672-1968, www.centennialhall.london.ca

october 23

BREAKFAST FOR BURSARIES

In support of an endowment fund to make attendance at Brescia College possible for mature women from the local area, London Convention Centre, 519-432-8353 ext 28446, www.brescia.uwo.ca

october 24

FEIST

In concert at the John Labatt Centre. Tickets at JLC Box Office, 1-866-455-2849, www.johnlabattcentre.com

october 24

AN AUSSIE SUMMER

Speakers Barry and Jean Aitridge spent three months traveling around western and southern Australia last year photographing plants and animals, 7:30 p.m., Civic Garden Complex.

Organized by Meliwrath Field Naturalists, 519-649-4168, www.meliwrath.ca

beginning october 24

CHRISTMAS PET GIFT LOCATIONS

Between Oct. 24 and late Dec., The London Humane Society sets up tables across the city selling affordable pet gifts. All proceeds go directly to shelter animals. For a complete list of dates and venues 519-451-0630 x 222, www.londonhumaneociety.ca

october 24-26

LONDON FALL ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW

30th annual show featuring unique arts and craft items, Western Fairgrounds, 519-679-1810, www.londoncraftshow.com



Retro-rocker Lenny Kravitz brings his Love Revolution tour to the John Labatt Centre on October 25, with opening act Sloan

october 25

2008 LONDON GULUWALK

GuluWalk is focused on supporting the abandoned children of northern Uganda. This event involves music and speakers followed by a fundraising walk, Victoria Park, 416-686-1533, www.guluwalk.com

october 25

LENNY KRAVITZ

In concert at the John Labatt Centre. Tickets at JLC Box Office, 1-866-455-2849, www.johnlabattcentre.com

october 26

HALLOWEEN HAUNTING RUN

10 km run and 3 km fun run/walk, in support of London Track 3 Ski School for the Disabled, Springbank Park. Register at Runners' Choice, 519-672-5928, www.runnerschoice.ca

october 28

HENRY ROLLINS

Recountdown Tour at Centennial Hall, 519-672-1967, 519-672-1968, www.centennialhall.london.ca

october 29

POETRY READING

Poetry London presents poets Brian Bartlett and Betty Struthers reading at London Branch Library, 7:30 p.m., free, 519-439-6240, www.poetrylondon.ca

october 30

TENNESSEE THREE

With special guests Scarlet! at Centennial Hall, 519-672-1967, 519-672-1968, www.centennialhall.london.ca

november 1-2

THE LIPIZANER STALLIONS

Live at the John Labatt Centre. Tickets at JLC Box Office, 1-866-455-2849, www.johnlabattcentre.com

november 2

BEHIND THE ROPES

Join historical interpreters for a special tour of Eldon House, 1, 2 & 3 p.m. 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca

november 2

FASHION & TEA 2008

Osteoparcia Canada, London & Thames Valley Chapter, presents a fashion show & tea event, Charwell Retirement Residence, 2-4 p.m., 519-457-0624.

november 2

FANSHAW CONSERVATION AREA STROLL

Easy stroll to enjoy late fall, 1:30 p.m., meet the leader at the Fanshawe Dam. Organized by Meliwrath Field Naturalists, 519-434-1931, www.meliwrath.ca

november 5-9

ART MART SHOW AND SALE

More than 100 local artists' works are included in this show and sale, proceeds support Museum London, 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca

november 6

COCKTAILS WITH THE CURATORS

Unwind after work with music and conversation about art and local history, Museum London, 5 p.m., free, 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca

november 7-9

HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

Self-directed tour showcases five unique London homes decorated by local designers and featuring the best in festive decorating ideas, fundraiser for Thames Valley Children's Centre. Included in the tour is a Tea Room at the Civic Garden Complex/Greenhouse, 519-685-8700, ext 53386, www.hvac.ca

november 8-9

KIDS & FAMILY EXPO

Games, activities, live entertainment and competitions for kids, no guns or violence of any kind, Western Fairgrounds, 519-432-5189, www.familyshowscanada.com

november 13

GROWN-UPS AT PLAY COCKTAIL PARTY

Annual London Regional Children's Museum cocktail party fundraiser. Rediscovering childhood is the theme of the evening with whimsical appetizers, craft cocktails and exciting entertainment, 519-434-5726, www.londonchildrensmuseum.ca

november 15

LONDON SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Annual parade begins at 6 p.m., runs west along Dundas St. to downtown. 2008 theme: A Polar Christmas, 519-668-3576, www.londonantadasparade.ca

november 15

THE PASTRY CHALLENGE

Fundraiser for Skills London Oxford/Middlesex Elgin (SLOME). Area high school students create delectable delights that you get to judge, Spencer Leadership Centre, 7 p.m., 519-672-3499, www.localboard.on.ca

november 20

SPEAKER SALLY ARMSTRONG

The Book Store at Western presents Sally Armstrong, author of *Bitter Roots*, *Tender Shoots*. The Uncertain Fate of Afghanistan's Women, 7 pm, Wolf Performance Hall, Central Library, 519-661-3520 x 84573, or www.bookstore.uwo.ca

november 20

DANCE HALL DAZE REVISITED

Learn the dances of past eras with instructor and historian Cathy Stephens, Museum London, 8 p.m., 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca

november 26

POETRY READING

Poetry London presents poets George Annable and John Terpsith reading at London Branch Library, 7:30 pm, free, 519-439-6240, www.poetrylondon.ca

november 28

LIGHTING OF THE LIGHTS

Trees lit with hundreds of coloured lights, Christmas displays, free skating, Victoria Park. Opening ceremony 6:15-7 p.m. Lights remain on nightly until Jan. 1, 2009. 519-661-5000, www.london.ca

november 28

BIRDING ARGENTINA

Join Steve Pike on his epic journey through Argentina from the Atlantic to the Andes and from the rain forest to the Beagle Channel, 7:30 p.m., Civic Garden Complex. Organized by McIlwraith Field Naturalists, 519-649-4168, www.mcilwraith.ca

beginning november 28

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS AT ELDON HOUSE

Enjoy the sights and sounds of historic Eldon House decorated for an old-fashioned Christmas through until January 1, 2009. 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca

MUSIC

AEOLIAN HALL

Upcoming events include San Francisco based singer-songwriter Shannon Bryant (Oct. 3), Great Lake Swimmers (Oct. 17), Ron Sexsmith (Oct. 22), Delhi 2 Dublin (Oct. 23), Buffy Sainte-Marie (Oct. 30), Daniel Lanois (Nov. 6), DK Ibomela (Nov. 22), 519-672-7950, www.aeolianhall.ca

CUCKOO'S NEST FOLK CLUB

Their 15th season at Chaucer's Pub continues with Paul Mills & Joanne Crabtree (Oct. 19), British duo Dave Webster & Ann Ferrihan (Nov. 9) and Glowfoot (Nov. 23). Tickets for \$15 advance & \$18 at door. Advance tickets available at

Centennial Hall Box Office, Chapters (Masonville), The Village Idiot, L'Asileur Grigorian and Chaucer's/Manenbad Restaurant, 519-473-2099, www.CuckoosNestfolk.ca

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Directed by Gina Wilkinson

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to November 8
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What's On october november

ENCORE...THE CONCERT BAND

Their first concert of the season includes special guests Central Secondary School Jazz Ensemble (Oct 19). All concerts are held at Central Secondary School, 509 Waterloo St. at 2 p.m. Tickets are available at Belle Air Music, L'Atelier Grigorian, Waters Music and at the door, 519-652-5913, www.ensembleconcertband.ca.

ERIC STACH FREE MUSIC UNIT

Fall series of improvisational music, every Friday night through Dec. 5, 9:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Guest musicians, open sessions and art exhibit featuring new paintings by Noel Sargeant. Studio 105, 105 Clarence Street.

FANSHAWE CHORUS LONDON/ GERALD FAGAN SINGERS

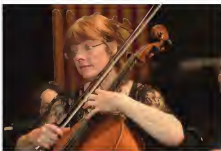
The new season for these two large local chamber choirs begins with a Gala Closing Concert for In Good Company (Nov. 1, Centennial Hall, 7:30 p.m.) followed by a Christmas Celebration (Nov. 28, Centennial Hall, 7:30 p.m.) and Christmas with Bach (Nov. 30, Windermere of the Mount, 3 p.m.). Tickets available at Centennial Hall Box Office 519-672-1967, from the Ticket Hotline 519-433-9650, 1-866-0244-0762, www.fscgh.com.

JAZZ BY THE BOG

Originally conceived as a single concert to raise funds for an addition, this project has grown into an annual series of three concerts presented at St. Aidan's Anglican Church, 1246 Oxford Street W. Their first concert this season is Latin Celebration featuring Paul Stevenson and Pachanga (Oct. 17, 8 p.m.). Tickets \$20 or \$55 for series (3 concerts) available at Belle Air Music, L'Atelier Grigorian, church office or at door, 519-471-1430.

KAREN SCHUESSLER SINGERS

The season begins with Come to the Proms, inspired by the famous BBC Proms concert at Royal Albert Hall, London, England (Nov. 22). They are also having a special children's concert on Oct. 19 (see the For Kids section below for details). All concerts 8 p.m. at Wesley-Knox United Church, 91 Aikin St. in Old South. Tickets at Belle Air Music, Turkey Home Hardware or at the door, 519-858-3202 www.kassingers.tsp.ca.



Orchestra London's 2008-2009 season hits full stride with their first concert in the Ovation Series, October 18 at Centennial Hall.

LONDON CITY MUSIC THEATRE

located in the former IMAX building at the Western Fairgrounds, upcoming shows include The Cowboys & Outlaws Show (Oct. 1-18), The Dove Hay Show (Oct. 9 & 23, Nov. 6 & 20), 11 Fox The Hypnotist (Oct. 10-11), Roy Le Blanc Tribute Show (Oct. 24-25), Showcase London (Oct. 30, Nov. 27) 519-432-0888, www.londoncitymusictheatre.com.

LONDON COMMUNITY ORCHESTRA

Celebrating their 35th season this year, the London Community Orchestra presents a series of classical music concerts, starting with their first concert of the season on Nov. 2. Concerts take place in Aeolian Hall, Sundays at 3 p.m. 519-432-4461, 519-652-8548, www.onlra.net/~lco.

LONDON JAZZ SOCIETY

Monthly live jazz concerts coming up include a special 2008/09 season opening concert featuring trombonist Peter Enmans and The Cameo Jazz Band (Oct. 5). Their Nov. concert is sold out but there are still tickets for the Dec. show, The Ken Vorley Quartet (Dec. 7). All concerts take place at 2 p.m. at the Moza Shrine Centre, 468 Colborne St. Tickets usually available at door or call 519-433-6789, www.londonjazzsociety.ca.

LONDON PRO MUSICA CHOIR

Their 39th season opens with Seasonal Music for Brass & Choir featuring guest artists Brassroots, an 11 piece professional brass ensemble (Nov. 30, 3 p.m., Dundas St. Centre United Church). Tickets available through Orchestra London Box Office, 519-679-8778, www.londonpromusica.org.

MUSIC WESTERN

The Don Wright Faculty of Music at The University of Western Ontario presents a series of concerts performed by students, faculty and internationally renowned guest artists, most of which are free. www.uwo.ca/music.

ORCHESTRA LONDON

The first concert in the Ovarians Series, their Ragship classical series at Centennial Hall, is Ode to Joy (Oct. 18), followed by King of Instrument (Nov. 22). Their Cathedral Series, Baroque and Classical concerts performed at St. Paul's Cathedral, begins with Mozart's Jupiter (Oct. 29), followed by JC Bach, Gossac & Haydn (Nov. 26). The Discovery Series, orchestral exploration of music from the last century at Wolf Performance Hall, includes Adams & Stravinsky (Nov. 5). The lighter Pops Series at Centennial Hall begins with a Gilbert & Sullivan Celebration (Oct. 25-26) and the first Red Hot Weekend featuring the Jeans n' Classics Band, also at

Centennial Hall, is Tommy in Concert (Oct. 23), followed by Purple Rain (Nov. 7-8). There are Serenade Branches at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn including a Mozart Brunch (Oct. 5), 519-679-8778, www.orchestrallondon.ca.

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL MUSIC PROGRAMS

There are several musical series offered at St Paul's Cathedral including Tuesday Noon Hour Organ Recitals. These run year round, every Tuesday, 12:15-12:45 p.m. They are free and no tickets are required. They are also having a special concert by students of the Master's Degree course at UWU with pianist Jo Greenaway (Oct. 3). Admission also free. 519-434-3225, www.stpaulscathedral.on.ca

SUNFEST WORLD MUSIC & JAZZ SERIES

The 2008/09 season continues with Delhi 2 Dublin with special guests Eccadalek (Oct. 23, Aeolian Hall, 8 p.m.) and Intillimint (Nov. 15, Aeolian Hall, 8 p.m.). www.sunfeston.ca, 519-672-1522.

THEATRE

GRAND THEATRE

The 2008/09 season of the Grand continues with a comedic clash between a young city actor and two seasoned farmers in The Drawer Boy (Oct. 21-Nov. 8), followed by their annual Christmas show, the timeless classic The Christmas Carol (beginning Nov. 19). At the McManus Stage, watch for a faithful and funny look into what the future may hold in Doom 2012: When Will YOU Die? (Oct. 15-18). 519-672-8800, 1-800-265-1593, www.grandtheatre.com.

MUSICAL THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

This musical theatre group presents two major shows each year from its home at the Palace Theatre. Their fall show is the Gilbert & Sullivan opera Iolanthe (Nov. 13-22). For tickets, call Palace Theatre Box Office 519-432-1029, www.musicaltheatreproductions.ca.

ORIGINAL KIDS THEATRE

The Senior Fall Playbill includes two Halloween shows, a new play Big Top Tamar (Oct. 21-26), recommended for age 14) and the musical Tamar at Night (Oct. 23-28, PGM, followed by the Johnny Cash musical Ring at

Fire (Nov. 18-23, PG) and The Who's Tommy (Dec. 3-7, recommended for ages 12). The Junior Fall Playbill includes a triple bill featuring OKTC At The Bar, All You Need Is...A Beatles Revue and On Broadway (Nov. 3-9). All shows take place at the Spirit Family Theatre at the Covent Garden Market. Tickets at the Grand Theatre boxoffice 519-672-8800, www.oktc.ca

PALACE THEATRE

The 2008/09 continues with *Inherit the Wind*, the story of a young Tennessee school teacher charged after teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution (Oct. 24-Nov. 1). 519-432-1029, www.londoncommunityplayers.com.

THEATRE SOUP

This local non-profit theatre company presents a production of *Agnes of God* by John Pielmeier (Nov. 13-22) at The Arts Project. Tickets \$15, \$10 for students, available at the door or in advance from The Arts Project 519-642-2767 or for info, 519-433-5047 (7687), www.theatresoup.com.

GALLERIES

MUSEUM LONDON

Present and upcoming exhibitions include *Facts and Figures: Selections from the Collection* (ongoing), *Dance Hall Daze* (ongoing), 10th Annual RSC Painting Competition (Oct. 22-30), T&T Onward Future (until Nov. 2), Carl Schaefer: Storm on the Horizon (beginning Nov. 9), The Iconography of the Imagination: The Art of James Reaney (beginning Nov. 15), Pulp Fiction (until Nov. 16), Paula Jean Cowan: XXXII (until Nov. 16). Open Tues. through Sun. noon to 5 p.m. (and until 9 p.m. on Thursdays). Admission by donation. Dates and shows can be changed without notice so please confirm 519-661-0333, www.museumlondon.ca.

MCINTOSH GALLERY

Winterland continues until Nov. 2. Their Talk Tuesdays series is an informal way to meet other people interested in art and artists - featuring different programs almost every Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. 519-661-3181, www.mcintoshgallery.ca

SMALLER/SPECIALTY GALLERIES

The Arts Project hosts an Instructorless Life Drawing for Artists workshop each week (every Monday evening, 7-10 p.m.) for professional and amateur artists. They provide the facility, the seating and the model and you bring your own supplies and drawing board. The classes, with their combination of short and long poses, give artists an opportunity to sharpen their life drawing skills. Cost is \$10 per session. In other small gallery news, The Innuit Gallery annual Cape Dorset Print Show begins with a preview night on Thursday, Oct. 16th and officially opens on the 17th. The show runs until Nov. 29. And, the Threlson Gallery has recent painting and drawings by Duncan deKernemieux until Oct. 18 followed by new paintings by Allen Smutko. Nomadic Remnants from Oct. 24 through Nov. 15.



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NAME: Renée Silberman

OCCUPATION: Founder and organizer,
Serenata Music

FAMILY: Single, mother of Benjamin,
Daniel and Nina

I GREW UP IN PITTSBURGH, among a circle of musicians who were my family's friends. Music was always in the atmosphere, and even those of us who weren't professional musicians played as amateurs and developed a love of artistic life. In his later years my father decided to make it possible for young musicians to come to Pittsburgh and perform before audiences during the summer months. It was a model that I absorbed without thinking that I would follow in my parents' footsteps.

SERENATA IS LIKE MY FOURTH CHILD. It developed from small experimental programs I offered the City of London in the 1990s, but the idea came to fulfillment in 2003 as I began to circulate among local musicians who were looking for performance opportunities. In my enthusiasm for organizing events, I began to think of musicians I knew far beyond the confines of London—artists whose presence here could be enjoyed by people in this city. In fact, Serenata is really as much a matchmaking effort as a presenting opportunity. I love finding a good match. I'm drawn in equal measure to the established and the famous as I am to the new and exotic.

I LOVE CLASSICAL MUSIC IN GENERAL, but I especially love the intimacy afforded by chamber music. Everything about it is cozy, and that is in keeping with my love of feeling close to people. In thinking of a name for the concert series I hit upon a wordplay, combining the Italian word for serenade with the Italian form of my own name, Renata. It's through the choice of this name that I have placed myself in the heart of music making, not as a performer but as a facilitator—a ringmaster. I want to create an atmosphere where people enjoy coming together to participate in an artistic moment.

IF I COULD INVITE ANYONE OVER for dinner, I'd invite Mozart, Beethoven, Charlie Chaplin, the Marx Brothers, and—if he would bring his violin—Einstein. *lee*



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